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Thursday, February 5, 2015

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Retailer gets the OK to liquidate its stock. Page 16.

New city schools to include gender-neutral washrooms

Identity. Students consulted on creation of inclusive spaces

It wasn't exams or essays that used to stress out Alexis Hood, but rather a simple trip to the school bathroom.

As a transgender student at Forest Lawn High School, she said finding a place to do one's business was a "lose-lose" scenario.

"Some of us were using our preferred washrooms, and kids would target us, and then we would go to the one where we would fit and were told we were in the wrong one," Hood explained.

After complaints, the school did take action, converting two single-person staff washrooms into gender-neutral sites that could be used by students if they obtained a key from the teacher sponsor of the school's gay-straight alliance.

Even then, the situation is not ideal. Fellow transgender student Sam Dyck said it can take up to 15 minutes for him to trek across the building to get the key and use the washroom.

"They need to be more accessible; it's really inconvenient," he said.

But there's hope on the horizon.

Earlier this month, Dyck and a peer sat down with a group of Calgary Board of Education (CBE) officials to talk about plans to incorporate designated gender-neutral washrooms in the designs of up to 20 new schools due to begin opening in fall 2016.

"I'm very hopeful these washrooms are going to be more common in schools," Dyck said. "Let's face it: we kind of need them in all schools."

There was also discussion of retrofitting washroom spaces to make them more inclusive in existing schools, Dyck said, as well as talk of establishing gender-neutral change rooms for those participating in gym class.

Sam Dyck, a transgender student at Forest Lawn High School, was consulted earlier this month on plans for gender-neutral washrooms in 20 new schools being planned by the Calgary Board of Education. JENNIFER FRIESEN/FOR METRO

The CBE confirmed that gender-neutral washrooms are being incorporated in the designs of all new schools.

No one was made available for an interview, but the organization said in a statement that all members of the school community "share the responsibility of cultivating environments that welcome everyone and provide opportunities to thrive in life and learning."

A spokesperson for the Calgary Catholic School District said staff washrooms at all its facilities are offered up as gender-neutral spaces for students.

Dyck said the washrooms are hardly different from typical ones, but the removal of the sign on the door signalling whether it's for a man or woman is highly important.

The washrooms also need to be accessible for those in wheelchairs and located near areas teachers frequent so they can keep an eye out for potential issues that may arise.

The topic of gender-neutral washrooms was also raised at a forum in Edmonton last week concerning gay-straight alliances. It's expected new legislation will be brought to the provincial legislature later this year specifying the rules for schools where students request to form such groups.

Last week's forum was attended by Education Minister Gordon Dirks, but he wasn't made available for an interview on the matter Wednesday.

Dirks did issue a statement but made no specific mention of gender-neutral washrooms.

"All school boards are required to ensure they are providing a welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environment for students," the minister wrote. "All school jurisdictions have flexibility in the design of their schools to determine how they wish to address the needs of all students and staff."

JEREMY NOLAIS/METRO

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Residents decry loss of trees to 'condo disease'

Urban canopy. Many in inner city concerned that city's efforts to protect Calgary's trees are falling short

ROBSON FLETCHER
robson.fletcher@metronews.ca

More than 99 years ago, Calgary's first parks superintendent planted a green ash tree on a boulevard along 5A Street SW that has since been designated a "community historic resource."

On Tuesday, the storeys-high tree was cut down after its roots were ripped out to make way for a new condo development.

"We call it 'condo disease,' because only the trees that seem to be in front of developments are deemed expendable," said Rick Williams of the Cliff Bungalow-Mission Community Association.

It was more than a decade ago that the community association fought for the historic designation, Williams said following the loss of several other trees on 5A Street — again, for a condo development.

"We were quite proud of the work we did to get these trees under some kind of policy," he said.

Today, the city's heritage website describes the "continued use of Green Ash trees in the existing regularly spaced pattern" as the primary "character-defining element" of the inner-city street.

A sign on a tree in the 300 block of 22 Avenue SW indicates it is protected under city bylaw but a tree just a few metres to the east that once had the same designation was recently cut down due to "extenuating circumstances." The stump is pictured in the inset photo. ROBSON FLETCHER/METRO; INSET: CONTRIBUTED

Quoted

"We don't have any protection against taking down trees on private property ... if you've got a 500-year-old tree in your yard you can cut it down with no repercussions. So we think special attention should be paid to existing, city-owned urban canopy."

Rick Williams of the Cliff Bungalow-Mission Community Association

But that doesn't mean the trees are necessarily protected.

Tammy Robinson, the city's urban forestry lead, said the city aims to protect all its trees and this particular one was inspected in April, prior to construction, and deemed healthy.

The plan was to keep the tree in place by having the developer "pursue directional drilling" in order to install water and sewer lines, she added, but despite those efforts, "there was just too much of the root ball excavated" and it was determined the tree "more than likely wouldn't survive construction." So a permit was issued to remove it.

"We did everything to keep the tree there," she said. "Unfortunately, with the nature of the services and how that lot's laid out, it wasn't going to survive."

But Patrick Arnell wonders exactly what the city does to protect mature trees in the face of developers eager to get a job done quickly. He watched as two other trees were lost in front of a condo development in the 300 block of 22 Avenue SW a couple of weeks earlier.

Equipment operates in the now-void space between two green ash trees on 5A Street SW. Another tree, planted in 1915, stood there until this week. ROBSON FLETCHER/METRO

"How is it the city can issue a permit that says 'save the trees' but then later issue a permit to come cut them?" said Arnell, who also belongs to the Cliff Bungalow-Mission Community Association.

"That's the issue we're unclear about."

Robinson said one of those trees was slated for removal while the other was initially protected, but ran into a similar situation as the green ash on 5A Street. "Extenuating circumstances prevailed and we had to let that tree go," she said.

Developers do have to pay the "replacement value" of the trees they remove, she added, which the city reinvests into tree planting. But Williams said the valuations are often "ridiculous" and present little financial barrier to developers.

"It's more economically expedient to remove the tree than to retain the tree and we don't think that should be the driver," he said.

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Calgary sees significant drop in counterfeit cash crimes

Fraud. New BOC bills address funny money concerns: Police

MORGAN MODJESKI
morgan.modjeski@metronews.ca

The new polymer bank notes are pictured at the central train station in Vancouver in 2013. The Calgary Police say the new bills have been a major factor in the drop they've seen in counterfeit offences. JONATHAN HAYWARD/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Officials with the Calgary Chamber of Commerce say a drop in counterfeiting charges is good for local proprietors, as less time focused on fraud frees up owners to build-up their business.

"Any type of fraud can be really difficult for businesses and particularly small business owners, because it costs them money at the end of the day," said Scott Crockatt, a spokesman for the Calgary Chamber of Commerce.

"It's also very frustrating as it takes time and resources away from running their business and causes them to focus on something else and that's dealing with the fraud."

In 2013, the Calgary Police Service saw 127 counterfeiting offences, a drop of 87 per cent when compared to 980 in 2009.

According to a July report from ATB Financial, roughly 25 per cent of businesses in Alberta experienced fraud in the past year with the majority, roughly 29 per cent, being debit and credit card fraud.

Det. David Bailey of the Calgary police service's economic crimes unit said the drop is beneficial for the CPS.

"The less offences the frontline guys have to investigate, it frees them up to do other duties," he said.

"Any reduction in any criminal matters is always a positive for the Calgary police, but it's something we have to be ever-vigilant about," Bailey stressed.

"We're grateful for the reduction, but that doesn't mean we're taking our eyes off the ball."

Bailey said the new polymer bills phased in by the Bank of Canada since 2011 could be a contributing factor to the decrease, as, "bad-guys tend to do what's easy."

However, he said the CPS has seen a "slight increase" in the amount of counterfeit U.S. currency.

Quoted

"Any type of fraud can be really difficult for businesses and particularly small business owners."

Scott Crockatt, spokesman for the Calgary Chamber of Commerce

Ridesharing

City should work with province to regulate Uber: Councillor

With Uber already operating in Edmonton and recruiting drivers in Calgary, the province needs to come up with a co-ordinated "ride-hailing strategy," according to Coun. Diane Colley-Urquhart.

The Ward 13 councillor plans to introduce a motion at Monday's council meeting calling on Mayor Naheed Nenshi to work with the Alberta government in updating laws to better address this "emerging business model within the transportation sector."

According to the province, anyone who is compensated for driving requires a class-four licence and, despite Uber's recent move to offer free rides in Edmonton, it is still operating outside the law.

"It doesn't matter if Uber isn't charging for rides. If they're paying their drivers they require class four licences," said Christine Way, press secretary to Transportation Minister Wayne Drysdale.

Uber drivers also need commercial insurance under provincial rules, she noted.

Way said the province doesn't specifically plan to take any legal actions against the company, but expects local law enforcement to uphold existing legislation. ROBSON FLETCHER & RYAN TUMILTY/METRO

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Life after Wildrose more rewarding, says Smith

More than a month after Danielle Smith gutted Alberta's official Opposition by leading a mass floor-crossing, confusion remains over who thought up the idea.

Smith told a luncheon crowd in Okotoks that her key lieutenants, Rob Anderson and Shayne Saskiw, approached her with the idea in December.

Smith says she told the pair to initiate discussions with Premier Jim Prentice and his Progressive Conservatives.

Saskiw, however, did not cross the floor with Smith and eight other Wildrose MLAs in December.

Saskiw later said it was Smith's idea to approach the Tories and he reluctantly went along with it, but later dropped out because his heart wasn't in it.

Danielle Smith
THE CANADIAN PRESS

Smith is seeking the PC nomination for Highwood, while Saskiw hasn't said if he'll run for the Wildrose in the next election.

Smith said life inside the government tent has been more rewarding than "setting your hair on fire" in opposition.

"The levers that you have in opposition are a little more limited," said Smith, now a Progressive Conservative backbencher.

"You can light your hair on fire and do a press release. You can light your hair on fire and do a press conference. You can light your hair on fire and ask a question in question period.

"In government, it's a little bit different. You can write a briefing note and have a meeting with the premier or the minister to talk through the different issues."

Smith said as the opposition leader she had to loudly push the government to fix problems, whereas now she can quietly pull issues along behind the scenes. THE CANADIAN PRESS

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WEEKEND EVENTS

FRIDAY
THE KINKONAUTS AT THE BIRDS AND STONE THEATRE

The Kinkonauts are a comedic group that mixes improv and musical theatre with hilarious results. The troupe will be joined by New York comic Louie Pearlman and Edmonton comedian Leif Ingebrigsten.

SATURDAY
THE FASHION MARKET AT HOTEL BLACKFOOT

Calgary's February fashion market features 60 booths stocked by retailers from around the city, including South Hill Designs and Piper & Ally, and focuses on mid-to-high-end products with deep discounts.

SATURDAY
SPEED DATING FOR SPERM DONORS: LUNCH-BOX THEATRE

Playwright Natalie Meisner's sharp wit is on full display in this sparkling comedy about a lesbian couple looking for a suitable sperm donor so they can start a family.

SUNDAY
TINSLEY ELLIS AT ARTS COMMON

The Atlanta-based musician is considered one of the best blues guitarists around. Known for his southern-tinged electric blues sound, Ellis is on tour in support of his latest album, Tough Love. He plays the Martha Cohen Theatre as part of the PCL Blues Series.

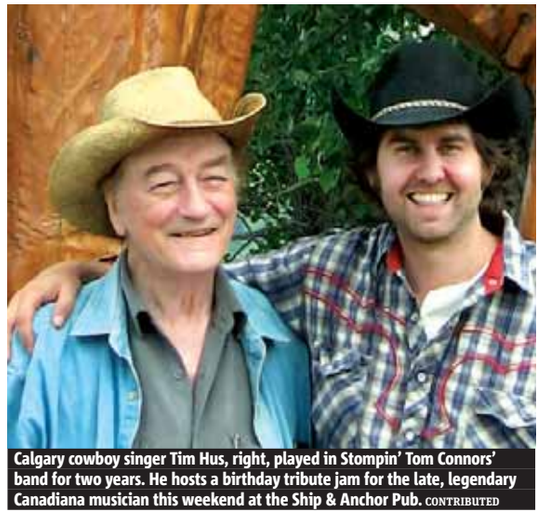
A tribute to Stompin' Tom

Jam. Tim Hus leads an open stage for local musicians to celebrate Connors' birthday

SCENE YYC
Lisa Wilton
calgary@metronews.ca

Service

The Stompin' Tom Tribute Show starts on Saturday at 2 p.m. at the Ship & Anchor Pub (534 – 17th Avenue S.W.) Admission is free. If you want to continue your Stompin' Tom day, head over to the Oak Tree Tavern in Kensington for the third-annual Stompin' Tom Tribute Night with Matt Masters and more.



Calgary cowboy singer Tim Hus, right, played in Stompin' Tom Connors' band for two years. He hosts a birthday tribute jam for the late, legendary Canadiana musician this weekend at the Ship & Anchor Pub. CONTRIBUTED

Tim Hus has many fond memories of legendary Canadian performer Stompin' Tom Connors.

But the one that sticks out the most for the Calgary-based "cowboy singer" is the night in 2009 when Stompin' Tom called the small-town Manitoba bar where Hus was playing and asked to speak with him.

"I picked up the phone, and it was Stompin' Tom telling me how he liked all of the songs I had written about Canada and that he appreciated how I was working hard to bring my show to every little town across the country," Hus says.

"Then he said, 'I'm wondering if you'd like to come on tour with me and help warm up the crowd?' I was very excited. It was the most thrilling phone call in my life, for sure."

Not only did Hus end up opening for Stompin' Tom but he joined his band and toured with him until Connors died in 2013 at the age of 77.

Hus says it was an interesting experience touring with Connors, who is best known for such Canadiana classics as Bud the Spud, Margo's Cargo and The Hockey Song.

"He was an eccentric character," Hus recalls.

"There was a clause in the contract that if you toured with Tom you had to be willing to stay up and drink Moosehead beer until 5 a.m.

"I thought that was just his way of making a little joke. But no, he was a night owl and he wanted his band to stay up with him."

For the past three years, Hus has organized and hosted a Stompin' Tom Tribute Show at the Ship & Anchor Pub to celebrate the New Brunswick-born musician's Feb. 9 birthday.

The afternoon jam will feature plenty of Stompin' Tom tunes performed by local musicians, including Hus and country crooner Matt Masters.

Hus says Stompin' Tom's musical legacy lives on because his songs resonate with Canadians.

"Basically he was presenting Canada to Canadians with stories and songs from all of his hitch-hiking travels."

Muse, a special photo exhibit

The photographers of Studio 122 are putting away the camera gear and setting up the gallery lights for a special week-long exhibition.

The show titled Muse features the work of seven local photographers and is part of this year's Exposure Photography Festival.

The commercial and editorial photo studio, located at 122, 4029 – 8th Street S.E., is used by several acclaimed Calgary photographers, including Greg Gerla, Colin Way, Jason Eng and Gerard Yunker, who jumped at the chance to display their more artistic side.

"The theme, muse, references the ancient Greek myth about the goddesses of inspiration," says Julya Hajnockzy, an Alberta College of Art and Design grad who will also be showcasing her photos in the exhibition, which runs Feb. 5 until Feb. 19.

"Since this show is all about personal work, the theme, muse, made sense because it spoke to the idea of photography that is inspired by whatever each shooter is passionate about,"she said.

Hajnockzy says part of the reason this particular photo exhibition is so interesting is that everyone who works out of Studio 122 has different areas of interest and expertise.

"There is a real diversity in the subject matter, but there is always a common thread," she says.

"Maybe it's just that when we make work solely to satisfy ourselves, in pursuit of something very inspiring to us, we take greater risks than we are able to with a commercial or editorial piece.

"Though sometimes there is overlap. You'll see work in the show from some occasions when we were lucky enough to have our muse and our job line up. It does happen."

LISA WILTON/FOR METRO

Crime

Border guards see drop in drug seizures at airport

Whether it was khat, steroids or heroin, border guards saw a drop in drug seizures at Calgary's largest airport in 2014.

A recent report from the Canada Border Services Agency says the number of seizures dropped 22 per cent in 2014 when compared to the previous year.

Lisa White, a spokeswoman for the CBSA, said while numbers have declined, 2014 was still an "exceptional year" for Canada's border security agency across Alberta.

"We don't necessarily look at the quantity of seizures or enforcement," she said. "Because one drug seizure or one proceeds-of-crime currency seizure could have a type of spill-over effect.

"We're talking societal impacts and impacts on border security (and) impacts on public safety."

One seizure highlighted in the 2014 report was when border guards confiscated 6.7 kilograms of heroin from Tanzania in January.

MORGAN MODJESKI/METRO

The 6.7 kilograms of heroin seized by CBSA agents in January 2014. COURTESY CBSA

Beltline gets final glimpse of designs for planned park

Green space. City hopes to open Thomson Family Park in 2016, with construction possibly starting this year

ROBSON FLETCHER
robson.fletcher@metronews.ca

Beltline residents got one more sneak peek at the latest designs for a new urban park Wednesday and a chance to offer final input before the $4-million project in West Connaught gets underway in earnest.

If all goes well, the city hopes to break ground on Thomson Family Park later this year, said project manager Michelle Wong.

The park is so named because of a $2-million donation from a local family to get the project started.

"The mother of the (Thomson) family grew up in this area, so she has a really strong connection to the community," said Wong. "And they're life-long members of the Grace Presbyterian Church, which is just a block away."

Quoted

"Every single park is unique because the context is very different. But with an urban park, there are obviously certain issues that do come up more frequently than in some other parks — things like safety, things like visibility into the park, things like undesirable activity."

Project manager Michelle Wong, on the design of Thomson Family Park

The west side of the park — located along 16th Avenue S.W. between 11th and 12th streets — will occupy the space of the current Calgary Lawn Bowling Club, which is set to relocate to the southwest community of Spruce Cliff.

The park will include an "open green space" concept, with slightly sunken artificial turf that could be used for anything from games of pick-up soccer to outdoor yoga to music concerts. It will be lit overhead for night use and could be flooded in the winter to make a skating rink.

The east side of the park will also have open, natural green spaces, in addition to a playground and a sequence of fountains along a curved main pathway that emulates the arc of a lawn-bowling ball's travel.

Illuminated polycarbonate fins will line the pathway to keep the park well lit at night with bright but diffused light, Wong said.

Chad Neufeld lives and works just blocks from the area and walks through the existing green space regularly.

"I would say it's underutilized, for sure," he said. "As a green space it seems like a bit of an afterthought, and there's a huge space taken up by the lawn bowling."

With precious few parks in the Beltline, Neufeld said he's looking forward to the redevelopment.

Central Memorial Park to the east offers a nice area to relax but is less conducive to sports and outdoor activities, he said.

"If you want to have families living in this area, you have to provide a space that is clean and open and inviting and bright and safe and fun for kids," Neufeld said.

Project manager Michelle Wong speaks to Beltline residents at an open house Wednesday on the design of Thomson Family Park. ROBSON FLETCHER/METRO

Nenshi joins students for annual Winter Walk Day

About 100 Calgarians met with Mayor Naheed Nenshi at the Village Square Leisure Centre for Calgary's annual Winter Walk Day. JENNIFER FRIESEN/FOR METRO

It may be easier to opt for your car and leave the arctic chill outside your window, but the province's annual Winter Walk Day is challenging Albertans to rally their Canadian gusto and get outside.

Mayor Naheed Nenshi joined in on Wednesday afternoon, alongside about 100 Calgarians, including students from Lester B. Pearson High School and Saint Patrick School.

Launched by a group called SHAPE, the initiative has been trying to get Albertans walking since 2008.

As Metro reported Monday, city surveys have found that youth aged five to 14 are walking less than ever. In 2001 the age group made up 27 per cent of all weekday walking trips, and in 2011 that number dropped to 13 per cent.

"As a result we're starting to see issues with children's health and children's performance at school," said Nenshi. "Getting that walk in is a really simple but important way of adding physical activity to your day."

The crowd took the 15-minute walk in stride, despite the winter temperatures, with many sidling up next to Nenshi to snap a selfie, including Katie Brown, who was out for her first Winter Walk Day.

"Seeing everybody out here is really encouraging," she said. "There are a lot of kids, and people of all ages are out walking. It's good; my breath's even starting to get a little bit quicker."

JENNIFER FRIESEN/FOR METRO

Are more cuts on the horizon at Mount Royal University? Faculty hope a week of advocacy events will do some good to combat a gloomy financial future. Inset: Mount Royal Faculty Association president Marc Schroeder.

JENNIFER FRIESEN/METRO; INSET: CONTRIBUTED

MRU faculty to stand against possible cuts

Funding. 'Advocacy week' planned to raise awareness, send message to province

The budgetary axe may yet fall again on Alberta's post-secondary sector, but faculty at one city institution appear unwilling to take further funding cuts lying down.

Mount Royal University arguably took it on the chin hardest in 2013 when provincial grants fell more than nine per cent short of what had been promised. The school had previously not been provided with proper funding to support new bachelor's degrees introduced when converting from a college to university in 2009.

"Mount Royal has lived through a double whammy of funding cuts and broken promises over the last five or six years and we're running very lean," explained Marc Schroeder, president of the campus faculty association. "There's widespread belief among faculty that there's really nowhere left where we can cut."

But indications are that Schroeder's school and others won't see a boost in funding in 2015 and may very well be saddled with another cut.

MRU administrators confirmed Wednesday that "top-level" budget scenarios being mapped out at the school account for anywhere from a zero to five per cent cut in the spring budget.

The University of Calgary is also planning for cuts that are potentially that deep, while a note from the University of Lethbridge indicates it believes the reductions could go as deep as eight per cent.

But Mount Royal faculty are now hosting five days of events on campus next week to get the message out on the importance of post-secondary education. It's likely the first "advocacy week" staged at the school and will include classroom discussions, letter-writing parties and panel discussions featuring senior officials and others within the Mount Royal community.

Roberta Lexier, who chairs the faculty association's advocacy committee, agreed with Schroeder that "there's no more fat to trim" but said she doesn't believe the post-secondary sector is given much consideration among provincial treasury representatives when it comes time to make tough decisions.

"There's a sense that the government can cut post-secondary because people aren't putting pressure on them to ensure that they don't.... I think at Mount Royal, we've been trying to combat a lot of that," she said.

In the wake of the 2013 cuts, hundreds from the university's community marched in protest to the nearby constituency office of then-premier Alison Redford.

For more about MRU's advocacy week, which begins Monday, email Lexier at rlexier@mtroyal.ca. JEREMY NOLAIS/METRO

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With a freshly shaven head, cadet James Gomez prepares to shave the head of fellow cadet Joel Palyga on Wednesday morning. MORGAN MODJESKI/METRO

Cadets shave, shave it off for a good cause

Fundraiser. Members of Calgary police auxiliary core, friend go bald for Canadian Cancer Society

MORGAN MODJESKI
morgan.modjeski@metronews.ca

Members of the Calgary Police Service's auxiliary cadet core got a haircut for a good cause on Wednesday morning.

Two members of the core, alongside a friend of the cadets, had their heads shaved as a way to raise funds for the Canadian Cancer Society.

Officials with the CPS youth mentorship program said efforts like this send a positive message to kids across the city.

"I think this is an excellent opportunity for them to give back to the community and be role models for all kinds of youth across the city and our younger cadet core," said acting Sgt. Robyn Schweitzer.

The fundraising effort, which started roughly three weeks ago, aimed to raise $560 for the Canadian Cancer Society, but organizer and cadet James Gomez said they managed to exceed their goal, raising roughly $635.

"The reason we wanted to get involved in this is because I just wanted to do something for the community and do something to volunteer outside of work," he said, adding it "means a whole lot" that they were able to exceed their goal.

"We didn't have a whole lot of time to get a lot of donations and to get everything going. The fact that we got over our goal shows a lot of appreciation and thoughtfulness from the people who helped us.

"We couldn't have done it without them."

Quoted

"I think this is an excellent opportunity for them to give back to the community and be role models for all kinds of youth across the city and our younger cadet core."

Acting Sgt. Robyn Schweitzer

Government

MLAs cut salaries by five per cent

Alberta members of the legislature have voted to take a five per cent cut to their salaries. The move reduces the basic MLA salary to just over $127,000 a year.

It was a unanimous decision by the legislature's all-party member services committee — but the members were anything but united.

Government whip George VanderBurg made the motion, saying it's important to show leadership in lean times caused by low oil prices.

But NDP member Brian Mason called it a cynical ploy by the Progressive Conservatives to seize moral high ground before asking public-sector workers to cut their own wages.

Last week, Premier Jim Prentice and his cabinet also agreed to take a five per cent cut. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Crime

Babysitter accused of sexual assault

The Calgary Police Service's child abuse unit is investigating an alleged sexual assault on a youth by a babysitter.

Sgt. Joe Hebert with the CPS said police received a call reporting the incident from Calgary's Somerset neighbourhood around 8 p.m. on Tuesday night.

"The suspect's identity is known," he said on Wednesday morning.

"We've already done safety planning with the family and our child abuse unit will be investigating."

Police were not releasing where in the Somerset neighbourhood the incident took place and were unable to provide the victim's age.

At press time, no charges had been laid. Police are now working with the parents to ensure the youth is safe. MORGAN MODJESKI/METRO

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Contraband

Alberta Crown stays illegal tobacco charges against ex-First Nation chief

The Alberta Crown has stayed charges against the former chief of the Montana First Nation in a case involving 16 million contraband cigarettes.

Former chief Carolyn Buffalo and Robbie Dickson, president of Quebec-based Rainbow Tobacco Co., were arrested in 2011 following an investigation by the Alberta Gaming and Lottery Commission.

The contraband smokes were not marked for legal sale in Alberta and were seized from a building on the central Alberta reserve.

The two were charged under the Alberta Tobacco Tax Act with illegally possessing and storing contraband cigarettes.

A government official confirms charges against Buffalo were stayed last Thursday, but the case against Dickson is proceeding in court.

When the charges were laid, the province estimated it would have lost $3 million in tobacco tax revenue if the seized cigarettes had been sold. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Development. Makeover planned for Deerfoot Mall

Calgary's Deerfoot Mall is due for a major makeover — and now you can check out plans for the shopping site, located just off the city's busy stretch of road.

It's being called a "total transformation."

Shape Properties is taking the lead on the site and released last week a video of its plans. The hope is to have the project completed in 2017.

The redevelopment will transform the mall by taking the empty adjacent lots and transforming them into a pedestrian-friendly shopping experience.

Complete with outdoor and indoor stores and plazas. In total there will be 79 retailers involved, but some confirmed stores are: Walmart Supercentre, Winners, Sport Chek, GoodLife Fitness and Cabela's. The project will be completed in two phases, starting in 2015.

At more than a million square feet of space, the reimagined centre will include locations like a fashion and restaurant row, a central plaza and food lodge. METRO

A northeast Calgary mall reimagined. CONTRIBUTED

Recent ACAD graduate Jasmine Jones, seen here with some of her work, participated in the first RAW: Natural Born Artists showcase. ROBSON FLETCHER/METRO

Calgary artists get noticed with new showcase model

Art. Local talent enjoying exposure that comes from participating in RAW: Natural Born Artists

HELEN PIKE
helen.pike@metronews.ca

It's not quite an art gallery, craft fair and certainly not a rock show — but RAW: Natural Born Artists is proving to be an effective way for Calgary artists to get noticed.

The first showcase of the one-of-a-kind event happened January, and though it has its critics, local talent is enjoying the exposure from taking part in this promotional beast.

On Jan. 8, more than 600 people showed up to take in the work, buy art and network.

Participants sign up online and pitch to be a part of the crowd. If accepted, they're on the hook for selling 20 tickets apiece at $15 — any leftovers are covered out of pocket.

The sales help RAW put on the showcase, but unlike other art shows (that can take anywhere from 40 to 50 per cent of artists earnings), the company doesn't keep commission.

"Each artist gets shots of their work showcased at the event," said Lizzie Carr, showcase director for RAW Calgary, in an email.

She noted a film crew also records the evening and creates a promotional video from footage to post online.

"Ticket sales fund the showcase and the perks provided for artists," Carr said.

Jasmine Jones participated in the group's first local showcase. By day she works for an advertising agency, but she's also an oil painter who specializes in portraits.

"I think a lot of the art world has to do with taking risks," said Jones, a recent ACAD grad. "I would recommend it to artists, but probably artists who are good at marketing themselves, because that's what a lot of being an artist is."

She said plenty of interested folks have contacted her as a direct result of her participation in RAW.

"It was really thrilling," Jones said. "A lot of shows you participate in you show up, you set up and then that's it … I think this is something that's going to be a continued relationship between artist and venue and curator."

The next showcase is set for March, and Carr hopes it will be bigger and better than the first.

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Damage to a helicopter can be seen after pilots were forced to make a hard landing west of Calgary on Tuesday morning. COURTESY RCMP

Helicopter makes hard landing

Emergency drill. Systems failure exercise underway when systems failed for real

MORGAN MODJESKI
morgan.modjeski@metronews.ca

It was a training exercise turned real.

Cochrane RCMP said it appears two passengers were practising a system-failure exercise in a helicopter Wednesday when the aircraft's systems failed for real and forced its pilot to make an emergency landing.

"The instructor pilot took over command of the aircraft and was able to land the aircraft," Sgt. Jeff Campbell said of the training flight, which went down around 11 a.m.

The helicopter appeared to have experienced damage to its tail and windows and saw its landing skids bend during touchdown.

A 51-year-old pilot from Sylvan Lake and a 31-year-old trainee from Calgary were taken to hospital for a precautionary examination and Campbell credited the experience of the pilot for the landing.

"When you're actually in an aircraft that doesn't do what it's supposed to be doing, obviously it does shake them up a little bit," he said. "But with the instructor pilot taking command of the aircraft, he was in total control of the situation."

Springbank Airport general manager Larry Stock said he's seen a few instances where helicopters have had to make a hard landing during his time with the Calgary Airport Authority.

"It's an unusual occurrence, but it's not without precedent," he said. "It has happened before."

Stock said while he didn't see the crash, the two passengers are "probably lucky," noting the situation could have been much worse.

"It had potential for serious injury," he said. "Gladly, that didn't happen."

Stock said all information about the incident has been passed along to the Transportation Safety Board of Canada and they are now leading the investigation.

Quoted

"It's an unusual occurrence, but it's not without precedent ... It has happened before."

Springbank Airport general manager Larry Stock, saying he's seen a few instances where helicopters have had to make a hard landing during his time with the Calgary Airport Authority.

Student's mural to stay uncovered

The principal of an Alberta school says covering a painting of two young men kissing was "a misstep" and said it will remain uncovered on the school wall until there's more consultation with parents and students.

James Trodden, the principal of Onoway Junior-Senior High School in Onoway, Alta., sent a letter to parents about the mural that was painted by a student.

Grade 11 student Kaela Wilton says she got the OK from both the principal and art teacher before she went ahead and did the painting.

She says it was on a school wall for about a week before it was covered up.

Trodden said last week that the mural was covered for several reasons, but the main one was that it shows students kissing, which he says isn't allowed in school.

He added it was only covered for one day.

"In retrospect, covering the mural was a misstep — this evolved into a debate about public displays of affection in schools, sexual orientation and gender identity and art and censorship," Trodden said in the Feb. 2 letter.

"Regrettably, there has been some characterization of our school and larger community as being intolerant, discriminatory and behind the times.

"This is both unfair and uncharacteristic of Onoway Junior/Senior High School, its staff and its student population ... the mural will remain until a clear direction is established about how the school community and Northern Gateway Public Schools will respond to the key questions outlined." THE CANADIAN PRESS

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Terror suspect Awso Peshdary now under communication ban

Terror trial. Prosecutor says there are concerns of possible witness interference

Terrorism suspect Awso Peshdary has been barred — at least for the moment — from communicating with several people, partly due to Crown fears of witness intimidation.

The 25-year-old Ottawa man made an initial court appearance Wednesday following his arrest the day before on four charges, including participation in the activities of a terrorist group.

Two other Ottawa men — accused of joining extremists overseas — were also charged with terror-related offences, even though their whereabouts are unknown and one is reportedly dead.

Peshdary's lawyer, Richard Morris, said his client intends to plead not guilty.

"He's doing as well as can be expected," Morris said after the hearing in Ottawa.

Morris argued in court there was not enough information to grant the non-communication order, saying he was "still in the dark" as to the reasoning behind it.

Federal prosecutor Rod Sonley said the order was needed to prevent interference with a dozen or so individuals — including members of the Muslim students association at Ottawa's Algonquin College — who might be witnesses or otherwise figure in the case.

Sonley told a justice of the peace there was "more than sufficient" basis for the order and "no evidence to the contrary."

The resulting court order, which will be revisited at a hearing Monday, covers Peshdary's co-accused — John Maguire, 24, and Khadar Khalib, 23 — both of whom the RCMP consider active members of the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL).

Richard Morris, lawyer for terrorist suspect Awso Peshdary, speaks to media outside the Ottawa courthouse on Wednesday after an appearance by his client. SEAN KILPATRICK/THE CANADIAN PRESS

The extremist organization has been on a vicious, atrocity-riddled rampage across large portions of the Middle East, and is the target of a U.S.-led combat mission in Iraq by a coalition of countries, including Canada.

Peshdary was an associate of Maguire and once hoped to travel abroad with him, according to the RCMP. They believe Peshdary stayed in contact with Maguire, and together they entered into a conspiracy to send other Canadians to Syria to join ISIL.

Peshdary and Maguire collaborated with Khalib, who travelled to Syria at the end of March 2014 to join ISIL, the Mounties say.

Morris expressed concern Wednesday that he knew little about the charges against his client and that he was not allowed into an RCMP news conference Tuesday where his client's arrest was announced.

"I think it speaks poorly of the process when they're more concerned with press releases than they are with my client's constitutional rights," Morris said. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Suspects

The non-communication order also covers twin brothers Ashton and Carlos Larmond as well as Suliman Mohamed — who were arrested in January as part of an alleged terrorist conspiracy. The RCMP moved quickly to arrest Carlos at a Montreal airport as he was about to board a plane overseas.

- Though there are now terrorism charges against six young men from Ottawa, Federal prosecutor Rod Sonley played down the notion of direct connections between the arrests.

Queen's U investigates claim of prof teaching anti-vaccine info

Officials at Queen's University launched an investigation Wednesday into claims that a health sciences instructor has been teaching anti-vaccination materials in a first-year level course.

The allegation was raised on Twitter by a current student and a former student of the Kingston, Ont.-based university, who posted images of PowerPoint slides that were purportedly used in the class Health 102.

Melody Torcolacci, an adjunct professor, did not respond to interview requests.

Queen's principal Daniel Woolf took to Twitter to say he has asked provost Alan Harrison to investigate. Harrison said he and Woolf first heard of the claim when the Twitter conversation took off. Among questions Harrison wants answered is whether the kinesiology and health sciences department has received complaints in the past about the content of Torcolacci's lectures.

"I'm gathering information. That information gathering will include attempting to determine whether others in the university have ever had any sorts of issues raised with them about similar matters. And that's all I can say at this point," Harrison said.

The online discussion began when student Michael Green tweeted: "Can we talk about how horrible it is that Melody Torcolacci still teaches that vaccines cause autism in university level classes?"

Former Queen's student Isabelle Duchaine, who is now working on a master's degree in global governance at the University of Waterloo, began to Tweet slides from a PowerPoint presentation that Torcolacci allegedly used in her class.

Duchaine said she pushed the issue because of the recent surge in measles cases. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Ottawa

Mounties taking over security on Parliament Hill

Nearly a century of parliamentary tradition is coming to an end with the RCMP poised to take control of security inside the Parliament Buildings.

The Conservative government is seeking to give the Mounties power over what used to be an entirely independent security team patrolling the halls of the House of Commons and Senate.

Members of that tight-knit Commons team, led by former sergeant-at-arms Kevin Vickers, stopped a gunman's rampage in the Centre Block last October, a show of bravery that was widely hailed by MPs in the House of Commons.

Gunman Michael Zehaf Bibeau made it past RCMP officers stationed on Parliament Hill on the morning of Oct. 22; the force has long had control over the parliamentary grounds, but no jurisdiction inside the buildings.

Ongoing reviews of security on the Hill following the attack indicated a need for more unification among security personnel - something that's been recommended multiple times over the years, including by the auditor general in a 2012 report. THE CANADIAN PRESS

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ISIL. Middle East shaken by burning death of pilot

The horrific fate of a captured Jordanian pilot, burned to death by the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), unleashed a wave of grief and rage on Wednesday across the Middle East, a region long accustomed to upheavals and violence.

Political and religious leaders united in outrage and condemnation, saying the slaying of the airman goes against Islam's teachings.

The gruesome militant video of the last moments in the life of 26-year-old Lt. Muath Al-Kaseasbeh, whose F-16 crashed in Syria in December during a U.S.-led coalition raid on the extremist group, crossed a line — beyond the beheadings of Western hostages at the hands of ISIL.

From the world's most prestigious seat of Sunni Islam learning, Cairo's Al-Azhar Mosque, Grand Imam Ahmed al-Tayeb said the ISIL militants deserve the Quranic punishment of death, crucifixion or the chopping off of their arms for being enemies of God and the Prophet Muhammad.

"Islam prohibits the taking of an innocent life," al-Tayeb said. By burning the pilot to death, he added, the militants violated Islam's prohibition on the immolation or mutilation of bodies — even during wartime.

In Saudi Arabia, prominent cleric Sheik Salman al-Oudah cited on Wednesday a saying attributed to the Prophet Muhammad, which reserves for God alone the right to punish by fire.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Jordan. King seeks support for tougher strikes on ISIL

Jordan's king rushed home Wednesday, cutting short a U.S. trip, to rally public support for even tougher strikes against ISIL after the militants released a video showing a captured Jordanian pilot being burned to death in a cage.

The gruesome killing of 26-year-old Lt. Muath Al-Kaseasbeh, captured while participating in airstrikes by a U.S.-led coalition targeting the militants, sparked outrage across the Middle East and anti-ISIL protests in Jordan.

King Abdullah II, a staunch Western ally, returned home from a White House meeting with President Barack Obama during which both leaders affirmed their resolve to destroy the militants who have seized about one-third of Syria and Iraq.

Jordan believes the international community must intensify the campaign against ISIL, said government spokesman Mohammed al-Momani. "This evil can and should be defeated," he said.

Following the pilot's death, Jordan launched what it said would be a tough campaign against the Islamic State group. In a first response, Jordan executed Sajida al-Rishawi and Ziad al-Karbouly, two Iraqis linked to al-Qaida, government spokesman Mohammed al-Momani said. Another official said they were executed by hanging. Authorities said the pair would be buried later in Jordan.

However, public opinion in Jordan has been ambiguous — growing demands for revenge against the militants have been mixed with misgivings about Jordan's role in a bombing campaign widely seen as serving Western interests.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

In this combination photo, a series of images taken from video provided by TVBS show a commercial airplane clipping an elevated roadway Wednesday just before it careens into a river in Taipei, Taiwan. TVBS/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Growth of Asian airlines creates safety challenge

Training. Expansion means many new recruits; another flight crashes, at least 26 die

The deadly crash of a TransAsia plane into a river in Taiwan is again focusing the world's attention on the safety challenges facing fast-growing Asian airlines.

TransAsia has been adding new routes rapidly since the Taiwanese carrier went public in 2011. TransAsia and others like it are rushing to keep up with a travel boom driven by the region's growing middle class.

The ease and increasing affordability of flying helps fuel economic growth and a better lifestyle for Asian consumers. But as airlines carry more passengers across increasingly crowded skies, they are also racing to train enough pilots.

"The demand is almost exceeding the supply," says John M. Cox, who spent 25 years flying for US Airways and is now CEO of consultancy Safety Operating Systems.

Quickly-growing airlines need to maintain standards as they hire more pilots, maintenance workers, dispatchers and flight attendants. Cox says the Asian carriers are currently meeting those marks, but it's a big challenge.

TransAsia Airways Flight 235 crashed Wednesday shortly after takeoff from Taipei, Taiwan, with 58 people aboard. Dramatic video from a car's dashboard camera captured the moment that the plane, tilting madly, clipped a bridge before landing in a shallow river. At least 26 people were killed.

It was the second fatal accident in just over six months for the airline and its seventh serious accident in the past two decades, according aerospace publication Flightglobal. It comes barely a month after an AirAsia plane crashed into the Java Sea in a flight from Surabaya, Indonesia, to Singapore, killing all 162 aboard.

As Southeast Asia's economies grow, more people have money to travel and airlines are adding planes to whisk them across the region.

Aircraft manufactures Airbus, ATR, Boeing, Bombardier and Embraer delivered a whopping 1,543 new planes to airlines last year. That means a total of 30 planes rolled off their collective assembly lines every week — the fastest production rate in the history of commercial aviation. Most of those aircraft went to Asia.

"The exponential growth in and the demand for air travel were not anticipated by many of the governments in the region," Shukor Yusof, founder of the Malaysia-based aviation research firm Endau Analytics said in December. "And so you're seeing a lack of infrastructure, airports and pilots because nobody expected low-cost travel would have taken off as quickly, as rapidly, and would be as lucrative as it is now."

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France

Monopoly giving out real money to mark anniversary

You can pass go, get out of jail free and collect real money. The French version of Monopoly is celebrating its 80th year by slipping cash into 80 boxes of the game.

One box will have the full complement in real money — 20,580 euros (about $29,500) — as well as the Monopoly money needed to actually play the game, one of the most popular in France. Another 79 boxes will have smaller amounts, says Hasbro.

The Paris version lets players buy the Champs Élysées, four railroad stations and other famous avenues of the French capital.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Market Minute

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Dow Jones: 17,673.02 (+6.62)

Target stores in Canada are expected to start liquidating stock on Thursday.
NATHAN DENETTE/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Court clears liquidation sale at Target

Discounts. Prices up to 30 per cent off expected to start from Thursday

Shoppers can expect their local Target Canada stores to begin knocking down prices starting Thursday, after the retailer received court approval to liquidate its stock.

The company got the go-ahead following a hearing Wednesday involving dozens of lawyers representing the retailer, landlords and suppliers. Target spokeswoman Molly Snyder said discounts will take up to 30 per cent off regular prices.

Already many Target stores have stopped carrying perishables like milk, eggs and frozen foods, Snyder said.

The company is still clearing product out of its distribution centres, she added.

The court had yet to decide late Wednesday whether Target can begin the sales of its real estate assets.

The retailer and its liquidator have argued that it needs to sell the properties immediately to keep its speedy exit from the Canadian market on schedule for mid-May.

Landlords were concerned that Target's liquidation sales would tarnish the image of their malls and take away business from other stores that are renting space.

"I think all parties are exaggerating," Ontario Superior Court Justice Geoffrey Morawetz said.

In addition to its remaining inventory, Target's shelving, fixtures and equipment will also be sold.

The U.S.-based retailer announced last month that it would close all 133 of its Canadian stores and lay off more than 17,000 staff, just two years after it began opening stores in Canada.

Some of those reductions have already happened at its Toronto headquarters, downsized to 80 people from 770, Snyder said.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Aviation. Watchdog creating new rules to track aircraft

A top official with the International Civil Aviation Organization says it is moving quickly to create a standard that will help in the global tracking of commercial aircraft — especially when flying over water.

The head of the ICAO Council says during normal operations, an aircraft will be tracked every 15 minutes when flying over oceanic or remote areas. Olumuyiwa Benard Aliu says that when the aircraft is in distress, it would start to broadcast its position every minute.

ICAO's member states unanimously supported the new standard at a safety conference in Montreal.

The global tracking recommendation is one of several made in the wake of the disappearance of Malaysia Airlines Flight MH370 last March. THE CANADIAN PRESS

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VOICES

TO SAVE CANCON, WE NEED TO KILL IT

This year, CTV was able to force its cable and satellite partners to replace big-ticket American commercials with Canadian substitutes during broadcasts of the Super Bowl. In 2017, this won't be allowed. Metro's Matt LaForge wonders what else the CRTC will do to please Canadian viewers and what the culture stands to gain — and lose — in the deal

MATT LAFORGE
readers@metronews.ca

American Super Bowl commercials are here to herald the end of Canadian TV as we know it. This could be just what we need.

Last week we learned that for the 2017 Super Bowl broadcast, CRTC won't allow CTV to sub its Canadian clients' ads for the prestigious American-produced spots (a practice known as simultaneous substitution). It was surprising news, but maybe it shouldn't have been.

On the broadcast file, the Conservative government, to whom the CRTC answers, has been willing to give consumers what they want, even if it means sticking it to media conglomerates (recall the promise to unbundle cable packages in the 2013 throne speech).

The Super Bowl-commercial ruling is to date the most resolute enactment of the government's agenda. It scratches an itch that Canadian viewers have been whining about for years, and it means CTV's parent conglomerate will miss out on a lot of advertising revenue.

Precisely why the Tories are so keen to provide Canadians with the widest entertainment menu at the best prices is a worthwhile question, evoking as it potentially does the lessons of books like Brave New World and Amusing Ourselves to Death.

But we won't know the full answer without the benefit of real hindsight, and in any case the more salient question right now is the classic one: What happens next?

First, let's stipulate that the new trend isn't going to reverse itself any time soon. While a lot of sentimental lip service is paid in this country to cultural nationalism and to the abstract idea of safeguarding a place in the media marketplace for Canadian stories and songs, the on-the-ground view of the CRTC's Cancon regime is at best indifferent and at worst deeply cynical. There's a pervasive sense, at least within the demographic cohort to which I belong (youngish urbanites with lifelong media addictions and delusions of worldliness), that the Cancon game is rigged in favour of the suits and that half-baked, second-rate content is being knowingly passed off as world-class. Commonly heard in my world:

"Why would I watch that movie? It's Canadian."

"Are the Geminis the movie awards or the TV awards?"

"Who is this on the radio? Hedley? Wow. Our tax dollars at work."

"I miss Republic of Doyle. Just kidding."

So to the extent that the new policy represents the government's intention to take away a subsidy that has been perennially squandered on embarrassing mediocrity, there are lots of people who are all for it.

A man puts up a missing puppy and Clydesdale poster in this still from Budweiser's Super Bowl commercial. SCREENGRAB

The horse is out of the barn, and it's difficult to envision the next federal government, Conservative or otherwise, trying very hard to chase it.

But before we dance on the graves of the media makers and hail the era of the media takers, let's admit a second set of stipulations: That cultural nationalism is not an inherently empty concept and that deregulating the country's airwaves entirely would rob us of something that, in the present fog of simultaneous substitution and Mr. D reruns, we're taking for granted. This is true even at the level of Super Bowl commercials, where for every instance of low-stakes whimsy (e.g., Budweiser's puppy-and-Clydesdale from the 2014 broadcast), there's a more self-serious spot that overtly trades in American mythmaking (e.g., The 2013 ad in which Eminem drives around Detroit and foretells the city's inevitable Phoenix-like rise). To push out Canadian commercials, no matter how derivative or hokey, in favour of corporate America's fables about a culture that we're not a part of is to submit to a colonizer that might not even realize or care that it's colonizing.

This, of course, is what made the Cancon movement necessary in the first place.

Damned if we deregulate, damned if we don't. I don't say it lightly, but, of the two, deregulating might be the way to go — not as an end, but as a means.

The ill will toward Cancon is so ingrained and so toxic; we need a radical change to reverse it. In an unregulated media market, Canadians would be given a much-needed opportunity to rediscover what it is that the U.S. can never give us.

We would remember one particularly prescient Canadian telling us that you don't know what you've got till it's gone. In such a climate, a new and improved cultural-nationalism movement could take root and establish a system of promotion and protection that takes into account all the mistakes of the past.

If American Super Bowl ads are the first steps in the undo that leads to the redo, then let it rain Budweiser frogs.

Matt La Forge is Metro's managing editor of Canada, world and business.

Our cities need to be ready for extreme weather

STEPHANIE ORFORD
readers@metronews.ca

As extreme weather assaults Canada again, climate change is hitting close to home.

Flooding, like we've seen in Calgary and southern Manitoba, and extreme winter storms, like the one Halifax is currently experiencing, continue to affect millions of Canadians, and the weather is only going to get wilder.

Canadian cities need to act more quickly to prevent the costly and potentially tragic fallout from the erratic weather that's inevitably coming.

We need to create a national dialogue about protecting Canada's cities from extreme weather, and deal with problems before they start.

Cleaning up after the fact is outrageously expensive. The 2013 flood in Calgary cost $6 billion. Toronto spent more than $106 million repairing its damaged infrastructure after the 2013 ice storm.

According to a study published in Nature Climate Change last week, global warming is increasing the number of droughts across the U.S. and floods across countries in the western Pacific. It's one of many such studies showing increasing weather extremes worldwide.

A major culprit of all this chaos is rising ocean temperatures, making strong storms stronger and weak storms weaker, said a study published last Thursday in Science by atmospheric scientists at the University of Toronto.

While we need to tackle the root causes of climate change causing these rising temperatures, we also need to be ready for when disaster strikes.

We've taken some steps toward preparing our cities, but they're often buried in government reports or hidden behind closed doors, far from public.

Some cities have made positive initial moves.

Calgary is in the process of building a reservoir for runoff from the Elbow River to prevent future flooding.

The City of Toronto has created an action plan for protecting the city from damaging weather, including making sure drainage systems are widened and trees are pruned to reduce power line damage.

But these actions seem like small potatoes.

Will they prevent Canadian cities from grinding to a halt in a power outage, or thousands of people from losing their homes to a flood?

If we want our cities to withstand climate change, those who understand what we need to upgrade and how we can take action (engineers! urban planners!) should take leadership, speak out and help inform policymakers and the public.

If we want to protect our cities from climate change, everyone needs to be a part of the conversation.

Stephanie Orford is a writer based in Vancouver.

metro

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METRO'S TAKE ON THE WORLD OF CELEBRITIES

Conrad Hilton GETTY IMAGES

Sorry Conrad Hilton, fighting 'peasants' is so passé

Well, this is completely charming.

Conrad Hilton, younger brother of Paris and namesake of his hotel magnate grandfather, appeared in court this week to face charges he assaulted and intimidated several flight attendants on a trip from London to L.A. last summer.

According to an FBI affidavit, Hilton punched a bulkhead, nearly hitting a flight attendant, appeared delusional and erratic and had to be restrained for landing.

He also dropped the F-bomb some 25 times, and here are probably the best two of those times: "If you want to square up to me, bro, then bring it and I will f—ing fight you" and — my favourite — "I will f—ing own anyone on this flight. They are f—ing peasants."

Ah, the noble class.

Hilton also threatened to get the entire crew fired because "I know your boss!"

And worst of all, he delayed drink service on the flight by 40 minutes.

That is just not cool, bro.

Hilton was released on a $100,000 bond and will be back for arraignment next month.

His charges could land him in prison for as much as 20 years.

Tatum unleashes Magic Mike XXL trailer: You're welcome

Ladies of Tampa, this might be a good reason to take a personal day. The first trailer for Magic Mike XXL, this summer's sequel to the hit Channing Tatum stripperfest, is out. Sure, there's no Matthew McConaughey in this one, but is that such a problem? So, how does it look? Let's just say Tatum clearly spent more time in the gym before this than he did Jupiter Ascending. The poor guy can't even get any welding done without slipping into a hip-thrusting dance routine. As the trailer boldly states, you're welcome.

The Magic Mike XXL movie poster. CONTRIBUTED

The Wachowskis aren't phased by your trolling

Andy and Lana Wachowski have heard what you've said about Cloud Atlas, Speed Racer and the Matrix sequels — and what you're already saying about Jupiter Ascending — and you know what? They don't care.

"I've gotten a thicker skin when it comes to Internet searches on our art," Andy said in an interview that refers to talk of their new science-fiction film a "torrent of pessimism."

Yikes. Oh, and they're also not too worried about box-office receipts.

"The cultural obsession with equating a movie's success to its box office is incredibly damning to this industry," Andy insists.

"It's pushing the industry more and more to making pure product, which is another reason why you constantly have reboots. It's McDonald's. People know what they're going to sit down and watch. Inherently, it's unhealthy for your brain."

Andy and Lana Wachowski GETTY IMAGES

SCENE

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SHOPPERS DRUG MART

Finding the funny in unhappily ever after

Relationships. 500 Dates author chronicles 19 years of online dating disasters — and asks why romantic advice is skewed toward women

Author Mark Miller has written about his quest to find love online in a new book of essays called 500 Dates. ISTOCK

Mark Miller has survived 19 years of online dating since his 1995 divorce, yet he still has a smile on his face.

There's much to hate about the process, the Los Angeles-based humorist said in a recent interview, but he refuses to despair as he continues his hunt for true love. One thing that does bum him out, though, is how so much dating advice seems skewed to women.

That's why he decided to share his quest for ever after in a collection of essays called 500 Dates out this week from Skyhorse Publishing in time for that ultimate date night, Valentine's Day.

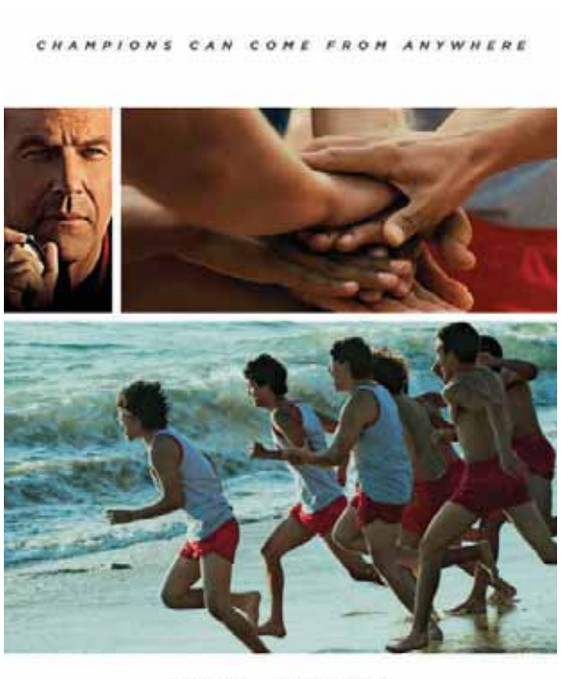
Miller, 62, isn't shy about poking fun at himself. He describes a dating disaster with accoutrements he purchased entirely from a 99-cent store. He's had sex way too soon after meeting someone, given up prematurely on relationships, stayed in relationships beyond their expiration dates and coveted his neighbour's wife.

Conversely, one of his dates showed up in her forest ranger uniform. Another admitted she was 15 years older than advertised in her dating profile, and a third made it clear that she found dating so soul-draining that he was her last-ditch attempt before she packed it in forever. It didn't work out. A conversation with Mark Miller about finding love online:

So how many dates are you up to now?
The 500 in the title is underestimating it. It would probably be closer to 750 if I was going to be honest about it. During that time I've found maybe seven fairy-tale endings that ranged from seven months to four years. I'm still looking.

How has happily ever after changed in the 21st century? You have a chapter where you write: "And they lived apart happily ever after is the new fairy tale ending."
I think that absence does make the heart grow fonder in many ways. I've spoken to a lot of people who date regularly and only see each other once a week. It's become more special, more datelike to them. There is such a thing as living together happily ever after but it doesn't happen for a lot of people, especially in this day and age.

Do men suffer from a lack of dating advice?
I think men are less prone to asking for that advice. They have more of an I-can-do-it-myself, more of a macho thing going on, whereas women are more open. If you do a search for dating books you'll find most of them are written either by women or for women. I think there was a void for men in that regard. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS



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Short fiction. Discovering stories in everyday things

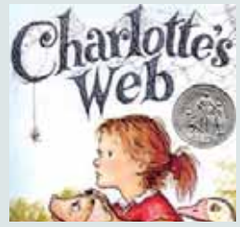
The very first short story Katherine Heiny ever published was in The New Yorker. Her first book, Single, Mellow, Carefree (out now) has Lena Dunham — among others — raving. We called Heiny up to get inside the brain of this wildly talented fiction writer.

The short stories in your book all take ordinary experiences, like a children's birthday party, and turn them into something exciting. Do you have a habit of creating stories about people you see every day in real life?
Oh, all the time. Ordinary things are really interesting to me. If I'm watching a reality show and people are fighting about who didn't get invited to a party, to me, that's fantastic. I think if you pay close attention to everyday things, they are often funny.

How does your writing process work?
When I start writing, I get the first line of the story and it always stays in the story, but it doesn't always stay as the first line. But there's always one line that sticks with me and the rest of the story will come over a few days. It takes me a month or more to write a short story ... I don't write chronologically; I write little scenes and then I have to put them together.

So many writers dream of being published in The New Yorker. How did that come about for you?
I wrote this story while I was in graduate school and sent it all over the place. I got 31 rejection letters. Then a friend of mine said, "What did The New Yorker say?" I told her I didn't send it there. She said, "Katherine, you're supposed to send it there first." So I mailed it off on a Thursday afternoon and they called Friday morning to accept it. I didn't even know the mail worked that fast. EMILY LAURENCE/METRO IN NEW YORK CITY

Digital publishing



E.B. White classics to be released as ebooks in March

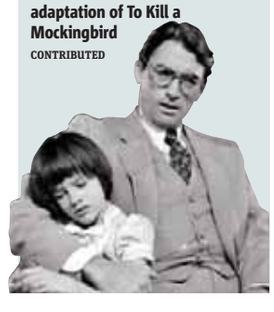
Three E.B. White classics read by millions of parents to their children will soon be available on the digital screen. HarperCollins said Wednesday that Charlotte's Web, Stuart Little and The Trumpet of the Swan can be purchased as ebooks starting March 17. White's granddaughter Martha White said family members had worried electronic sales would hurt business for their preferred format, paper. "After discussing this with our agent ... it's become apparent to us that ebooks complement sales of paper books, instead of replacing sales," White said. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Film adaptation

New Harper Lee book could mean movie sequel

The movie version of To Kill a Mockingbird is the rare adaptation as beloved as its source material. So when Harper Lee and her publisher announced that this summer they'll release the 88-year-old author's second book, Go Set a Watchmen, a kind of sequel to To Kill a Mockingbird, the shockwaves were felt almost as much in Hollywood as in the book world. If Lee agrees to sell the movie rights to her new book, it will likely be one of the most eagerly sought novels for optioning to the big screen. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Gregory Peck and Mary Badham in the 1962 film adaptation of To Kill a Mockingbird
CONTRIBUTED



The journey from shredding to scribbling

New release. Skateboarder Michael Christie draws from his own life in a tale of a boy and his mother

EMILY LAURENCE
Metro World News in New York

Former professional skateboarder turned award-winning writer Michael Christie has book critics everywhere fawning over his new novel, If I Fall, If I Die (out Jan. 20).

The protagonist is 11-year-old Will, who is fiercely close to his agoraphobic mother.

While his mom fears the outside world, Will is pulled toward it — especially when he discovers skateboarding — and the result is a heartfelt story of their relationship. The novel hits close to home, as Christie's own mother was agoraphobic.

Here, we talk to him about the four-year emotional process of getting Will's story down on paper.

Michael Christie says skateboarding and writing aren't all that different — they're both very individual and self-directed. CEDAR BOWERS

Writing requires a lot of energy, but it's a totally different type of energy than skateboarding.
I think everything (in life) prepares you for something else in some way. Skateboarding requires a sort of obsession. I think I just transferred that obsession from skateboarding to writing. It's all very self-directed, too. In skateboarding, there's no coach. There's no field. It's just you. You have to decide what to do and what you're capable of. Writing is the same way.

How much of the book is fiction, and how much is from your life?
A lot of the stuff in the book is different, but the emotional core of the book, which is this relationship between a mother and son that is maybe a little too close but is also kind of wonderful, that's very much the biggest relationship in my life, other than with my wife.

Did anything unexpected happen while you were writing it?
Yeah, I think if nothing unexpected happens while writing, then maybe you're in trouble. I didn't think you could write about skateboarding in a literary novel and connect with it. There's no movie, book or art about skateboarding that's actually good, so I was very wary of putting skateboarding in the book. But as I was doing it, I was like, is Will going to take up skateboarding? Is he going to do it? I think he is. I think I found a way to do it ... It was a scary book for me to write in many ways. I took a lot of emotional risks while doing it.

This isn't a traditional coming-of-age story, but it is still about coming of age. What do you think it means to grow up?
I think for everyone, there is a dramatic progression where you grow up in relative safety and we venture out, we get hurt, but we learn and grow that way. Growing up, there's a lot of facing fear, getting anxious and surviving things. That's what I wanted to capture.

New

Book celebrates all-season cycling

Frigid temps have the most diehard cyclists hiding out on transit and in their cars. But it doesn't have to be this way, according to Tom Babin, author of the recently published Frostbike (Rocky Mountain Books). The Calgary-based Babin set out to challenge the winter wariness that creeps into cyclist consciousness. He trekked to Oulu, a small city in northern Finland, where up to 30 per cent of the population ride their bikes through the winter on snow-packed paths. And he learned how the snow bike was born from the mind of an Alaskan winter mountain-bike racer and a Texas tire maker. Through his journey, Babin found the joys of pedalling through winter, and hopefully you will, too.
LIZ BROWN/METRO

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From farm to beauty cabinet

Style. A natural skincare expert explains why going organic is easier (and more effective) than you might think

TINA CHADHA
Metro New York

Wouldn't it be good to know that your glow has come naturally? ISTOCK

Don't kill us. You're about to rethink your favourite beauty products.

"A lot the ingredients (in cosmetics) are used in the car industry. Chemical emulsifiers, battery acids — and the sad part is, these ingredients aren't there to make you beautiful, but to make the product work," says natural skincare expert, Tata Harper.

"They are super-cheap industrial chemicals. But they make the formula feel amazing and last 12 years on the shelf without going bad."

The former industrial engineer spent five years working with biologist and chemists to perfect her high-performing, synthetic-free formulas. She now produces everything for her eponymous skincare line — from the botanical ingredients to packaging material — from her 1,200-acre certified organic farm in Vermont. We chatted with Harper about advances in natural beauty and when we should start slathering on anti-aging products.

For people who want to switch to natural products, where should they start?
Whether you're using natural or any other product, I always say start with things like cleansers, toners or masks. These are not a big financial commitment and will give you an idea on if you're going to like the products overall.

What natural ingredients are you loving?
The most impressive are the new neuropeptides. They basically give you the effects of Botox.

You feel complete relaxation of your muscle, obviously not of your full muscle, which is great because that way you don't lose expression in your face. But you get a relaxation of the wrinkle.

What are some advances in natural skincare right now?
Now you can find a lot of natural stem cells, which help regenerate the skin. Also, there's a lot of plumping ingredients. They're kind of like fillers but applied topically. And what happens is they go to your hypodermis, like your fat cells, and basically make your fat cells fatter and pump up the volume from within.

What's the most important part of a beauty regime?
There's nothing more important than serums or eye creams. Those two things are your real workhorses for the skin to drive collagen and anti-aging benefits. But the reality is if you don't clean your skin well and you don't exfoliate, 70 per cent of those serums are never going penetrate. A good cleansing, exfoliation is vital.

Make-it-yourself mask

" I love this mask. I've been doing it since I was a little kid," says Harper. "It's amazing for glow and clarity for the skin.

- "Mix together a half a cup of plain yogurt, it doesn't matter if it's Greek, strawberries, they have a high content of salicylic acids, so it helps with cellular turnover. Add in pineapple or papaya because they both have naturally occurring enzymes that help get rid of the buildup and clean the pores. Add two tablespoons of honey — especially raw honey. Blend it all together kind of like a really thick smoothie and apply. You can put it on your face, body, back. It basically helps bring immediate glow, moisturization and radiance."

I need me some natural

Rahua shampoo, $32

RMS eye polish in Solar $28

Mason Pearson brush, $120

Tata Harper Elixir Vitae, $365

Canadian street style

Name: Sheila

Age: 30

Occupation: Fashion stylist

What she's wearing
Forever 21 shoes, Oak & Fort T-shirt, Ann Taylor Cardigan, vintage coat, Ray Ban sunglasses, MinkPink scarf, Claire Vivier Bag.

Her inspiration
"I am inspired by menswear."

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Botanicals are in bloom

Great flowers start with pollination, and for that you need bees. Luxury label Burberry started off the revival, creating the buzz with its SS15 Ready to Wear collection which paid tribute to the insects and flowers of Britain. Coincidentally, at Paris Haute Couture week, flowers and florals were in fashion.

This past week, we learned that Chanel Director Karl Lagerfeld isn't the only designer with green fingers. Chanel's Spring flowering fashion featured gentle, curved silhouettes embellished with floral garlands, lush petals and beaded pistils. A colour palette of pinks, oranges, reds, electric blue, pollen yellow and sap green brought extra cheer to this upbeat collection.

There was no stopping Dutch design tandem Viktor&Rolf who pushed the flower trend to the limits. Bold 3D floral appliqué, graphic petal prints and abundant bouquet-esque babydoll dresses drew inspiration from flower-loving artist Van Gogh.

At the Alexis Mabille show, models wore sexy tattoo-inspired dresses with strategically placed creeping flower motifs that intertwined over the body. AFP

One of the latest specimens from Christian Dior's haute couture Spring garden. FRANCOIS GUILLOT / AFP

Cookbook of the Week

Cross-country to your kitchen table

In his show, You Gotta Eat Here!, John Catucci travels across Canada on a journey to find the country's best comfort foods. Now he teams up with Michael Vlessides for a followup to their first book. You Gotta Eat Here Too! features mouthwatering recipes from restaurants across Canada that you may have never heard of — and the colourful characters behind the establishments. Among the recipes are Codfish Cakes from Chafe's Landing in St. John's and Jerk Chicken from The SmoQue Shack in Ottawa.

METRO

There's comfort food, then there's this

Lunch or dinner. Indian Tacos replace the traditional soft or hard shell with unique doughy 'frybread'

"In this dish, frybread is topped with ground prime rib that's been cooked in a savoury stew with tomatoes, red kidney beans, and (chef) Brad's not-so-secret taco seasoning," write John Catucci and Michael Vlessides in You Gotta Eat Here Too! of the Indian Tacos that can be found at Burger Barn in Ohsweken, Six Nations of the Grand River Reserve, Ont.

Ingredients

Taco Seasoning
- 3 tbsp cornstarch
- 2 tbsp chili powder
- 1 tbsp salt
- 1 tbsp sweet paprika
- 1 tbsp sugar
- 2 1/4 tsp chicken soup base
- 1 1/2 tsp onion powder
- 1 tsp ground cumin
- 3/4 tsp garlic powder
- 3/4 tsp cayenne pepper

Taco Meat
- 2 lbs ground prime rib beef
- 2 tbsp unsalted butter
- 1 can (14 oz) red kidney beans, drained and rinsed
- 1 can (19 oz) stewed tomatoes, with juice

Frybread
- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 tbsp baking powder
- 1 tsp salt
- 1 cup buttermilk
- Canola oil

This recipe serves four. FROM YOU GOTTA EAT HERE TOO!

Taco Seasoning

1. In a bowl, combine all of the ingredients. Set aside.

Taco Meat

1. In skillet over medium-high heat, brown the ground beef with the butter. Drain any excess liquid. Add the kidney beans, stewed tomatoes, and 3 tablespoons of the prepared taco seasoning and stir to combine. Bring to a boil, reduce heat, and simmer for 45 minutes to allow flavours to meld.

Frybread

1. While the meat is cooking, in a medium bowl, combine the flour, baking powder, and salt. Stir in the buttermilk until the dough just comes together, adding more flour if dough is too sticky to handle.

2. Turn the dough out onto a lightly floured work surface and knead until smooth (do not over-knead — less is more).

3. In a large, deep, heavy skillet over medium-high heat, heat 3/4 inch of oil.

4. Using your hands, tear dough into 8 to 10 equal-sized pieces, each about 3/4 cup (the size of a baseball). Shape into round discs about 1/4 inch thick, making a thinner depressed area in the centre of each.

5. Fry breads in hot oil until golden on both sides, turning once. Drain on paper towel.

Assembly

1. Scoop taco meat onto frybread and top with shredded cheese, lettuce, tomatoes, red onion, sour cream.

FROM YOU GOTTA EAT HERE TOO! LONE EAGLE ENTERTAINMENT LTD. PUBLISHER BY COLLINS CANADA. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

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Best of show: 4 decor trends for spring

I recently returned from New York City where I attended the NYNOW Home & Lifestyle Show to view the latest decor products. I narrowed down the top four trends I kept seeing. Watch for these stylish looks coming to home decor stores this spring

DESIGN CENTRE
Karl Lohnes
home@metronews.ca

Tactile texture

Nubby silks, fur, chunky knits and braided items will add tactile texture to everything from rugs to pillows. Look for them in neutral colours that allow texture to be the star.

A super-thick wooden needle means you can make your own rug in less than an afternoon! DIY Crochet Aspen 32" Rug Kit, $235, Loopy-Mango.com

Add life to that boring neutral sofa. Divisional Orange 20" pillow, $50, CB2.com

Who says the hottest trends have to break the bank? Constance Orange Accent Chair, $599, UrbanBarn.com

Pops of orange

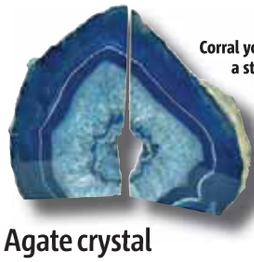
Colour kept popping up and the one that stood out the most was orange. Teamed with a sandy-beige tone to relax the jolt of citrus, orange feels juicy and spring-like.

Metallic copper

Although there were a lot of gold accents throughout the show, copper tones were trying hard to shine. Team copper with cream for summer and add it to black for a sexy look this fall.

Line them up or bunch them up to fit any space. Pascal Bunching Table, $269, CrateAndBarrel.com

Even the simplest shape deserves a little copper-tone glam. Porcelain & Copper Dipped Vase, $35, Chapters.Indigo.ca



Corral your books with a stylish trend. Blue Natural Agate Bookends, $138, Amazon.ca

Agate crystal

Slices of shiny stone, sparkling in blue, purple and green will be seen on items as tiny as napkins rings and as large as lamps.

Bonus trend

Christmas 2015 is going to be 'Retro 1965' so get digging in your parents' basement and check out spring yard sales this year.

- Think old pink, turquoise, silver, tinsel, light reflectors and bubble lights.

Think inside the box: Adaptable home in a cube

Architecture. Toronto-based developer touts customizable cube as the future of housing

How would you feel about replacing your house with a personalized cube?

Cubitat, a 10-metre-cubed prefabricated structure, offers just that. The concept, the result of a collaboration between Toronto-based Urban Capital and Nichetto Studios, is being billed as "the future of progressive housing" after going on show at the Interior Design Show 2015.

Inspired by both the prefab world and modern production methods, the custom-assembled architectural solution has been designed to be a "transferable home." It comprises a central frame which forms four walls containing pull-down furniture for each of the spaces.

"Cubitat is architecture on a whole new level, as product," says Urban Capital co-founder Mark Reeve. "We're rethinking the built world with the most adaptable home imagined."

So will the concept become a commercial reality? Watch this (cubed) space. AFP

Cubitat's core elements

The cube contains the core elements of a standard home, including a kitchen, bedroom, bathroom and lounge, all in one transportable cube.

- Customers can add furniture items and fittings to tailor each model to their own tastes.

Rethinking living space

"We're rethinking the built world with the most adaptable home imagined." Urban Capital co-founder Mark Reeve

Cubitat URBAN CAPITAL

Court

Hernandez, slain man weren't close: Girlfriend

Former New England Patriots star Aaron Hernandez often smoked marijuana with the man he's accused of later killing, and they hung out during family gatherings, the victim's girlfriend testified Wednesday. But she insisted that they had only the beginnings of a friendship and were not very close, contrary to what Hernandez's lawyers have said.

Shaneah Jenkins, the girlfriend of victim Odin Lloyd and the sister of Hernandez's fiancée, testified for a third day about Lloyd's relationship with Hernandez.

Hernandez's lawyers have said Hernandez had no reason to kill Lloyd and the two were friends.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

NBA

Raptors suffer first loss to a division rival

The Toronto Raptors are no longer unbeaten in the Atlantic Division, dropping a lopsided 109-93 loss to the Brooklyn Nets on Wednesday.

Terrence Ross scored a team-high 23 points, but it wasn't enough to lift the Raptors (33-17), in their second ugly performance in as many games. The loss was Toronto's first in 10 games against Atlantic opponents.

DeMar DeRozan had 13 points before being ejected with 1:02 to play after a flagrant foul on Bojan Bogdanovic. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Boston toasts its Super Bowl champions

New England Patriots tight end Rob Gronkowski chugs a beer, tossed to him by a fan, during a parade celebrating the team's fourth NFL title parade in Boston, Wednesday. The crowd roared as a smiling Bill Belichick and his players snapped selfies and took turns waving the Lombardi trophy earned in a hard-fought 28-24 Super Bowl victory over the defending champion Seattle Seahawks on Sunday. CHARLES KRUPA/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Stampeders, Sanders agree on extension

CFL. Running back/kick returner signs on to stay with Grey Cup champions

Jock Sanders was third in the league with 506 punt-return yards in 2014.
GETTY IMAGES FILE

The Calgary Stampeders have signed international running back and kick returner Jock Sanders to a contract extension.

Sanders was one of just six CFL players with 1,000 combined return yards last season despite missing six games.

He was third in the league with 506 punt-return yards and second with 201 return yards from missed field goals.

The 26-year-old St. Petersburg, Fla., native also had 298 kickoff-return yards in 2014.

On offence, he had 37 carries for 161 yards and 14 catches for 135 yards and one touchdown.

The West Virginia alum was sidelined by injury during the post-season and did not play in the Western Final or the Grey Cup.

"Jock was an important player for us on special teams as well as on offence when he was on the field in 2014," said head coach and general manager John Hufnagel. "I'm pleased that he has chosen to extend his contract with the club and I look forward to a healthy and productive season from him in 2015."

In 34 career regular-season games, he has 1,585 kickoff-return yards, 1,279 punt-return yards, 422 rushing yards and 53 receptions for 508 yards and three touchdowns with B.C., Saskatchewan and Calgary. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Staying in Calgary

3

Calgary is Sanders' third stop in the CFL, having also played for the B.C. Lions and Saskatchewan Roughriders.

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NHL

Predators get Rinne back

Predators goaltender Pekka Rinne has been cleared to return from a knee injury that kept him out the past three weeks, missing eight games.

He will start Thursday night against the Anaheim Ducks.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

NFL

Lynch won't be fined, league says

Seattle Seahawks' Marshawn Lynch fulfilled all his media obligations on Super Bowl week and will not be fined, said the NFL.

Lynch never appeared for more than five minutes, saying, "I'm just here so I won't get fined."

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

African Cup

Ivory Coast beats Congo in semifinal

Ivory Coast powered into the African Cup of Nations final with a dominant 3-1 win over Congo on Wednesday, giving the star-studded title favourite a chance at ending 25 years of agony at the continental championship.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Ivorian captain Yaya Touré

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

UFC doping scandal not a one-off

MMA. The positive tests of Silva and Diaz expose a much larger issue for Dana White

The UFC is reeling from its latest doping scandal, but is it any surprise?

The UFC revealed Tuesday night that former middleweight champion Anderson Silva, one of the sport's icons, had tested positive for steroids on a Jan. 9 out-of-competition drug test. Adding to the scandal, Nick Diaz, the man Silva beat in the main event of UFC 183 last Saturday, had tested positive for elevated marijuana levels for a third time.

The news comes on the heels of a positive cocaine test prior to UFC 182 for light-heavyweight champion Jon 'Bones' Jones, who succeeded Silva as the sport's pound-for-pound best fighter.

"Does anyone in the UFC actually follow the rules?" former Olympic and world wrestling champion Jordan Burroughs tweeted.

The rules are enforced by bodies like the Nevada State Athletic Commission, which tests boxers and MMA fighters alike in regulating their sports.

So-called social drugs are not considered performance-enhancing. But they are subject to sanction if detected on fight night, given the concern that fighters could suffer unnecessary damage if dulled or anesthetized by such drugs.

While Silva and Diaz have yet to tell their side of the story and confirmation of the tests is still pending, a thin doping line runs through the sport. The spotlight shines on the UFC as the sport's major player.

Welterweight Thiago Alves, German bantamweight Dennis Siver, Ashlee Evans-Smith ... The list goes on, with a nine-month ban and fine the usual punishment for a first offence.

With 45 shows planned for 2015, the UFC conveyor belt never stops. The organization currently has 575 fighters under contract. Most need to fight to pay the bills.

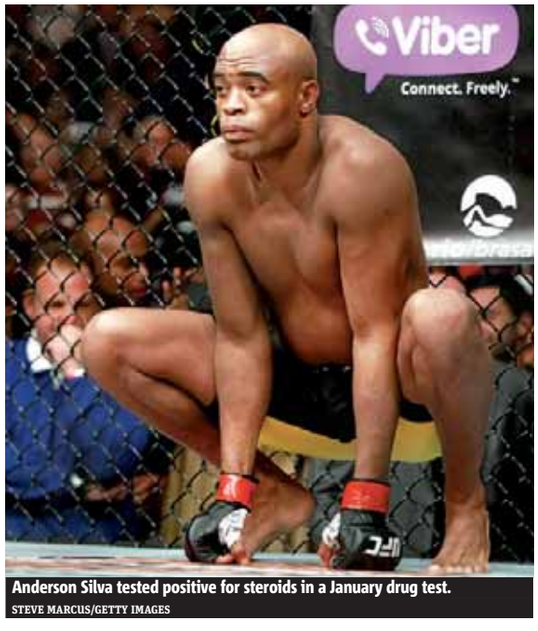
Brazilian light-heavyweight Thiago Silva admitted to doping and tampering with his urine at a UFC 125 drug test.

UFC president Dana White said his organization would probably give athletic commissions more money for them to conduct testing.

Asked what the UFC will do in the future in commission-free zones, he directed the questions to Marc Ratner, the UFC's vice-president of regulatory affairs. Ratner did not offer an immediate answer.

Given the sport's makeup, there may not be one.

THE CANADIAN PRESS



Anderson Silva tested positive for steroids in a January drug test.

STEVE MARCUS/GETTY IMAGES

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AUGMENTED REALITY

Stuck on 12 Across? Scan this image with your Metro News app for today's crossword and Sudoku answers. It's OK. No one's watching.

→ See the full instructions on Metro's Voices page.

Horoscopes by Sally Brompton

♈ Aries
March 21 - April 20
Don't be in so much of a hurry that you bite off more than you can chew today. If you have to ask for help it won't look too impressive, will it?

♉ Taurus
April 21 - May 21
You must tell the truth today, even if it hurts the feelings of people you love. It will hurt them more if they discover they were the only ones who did not know what was going on.

♊ Gemini
May 22 - June 21
You need to make an important decision today and you need some peace and quiet so you can think and, hopefully, come to the correct conclusion.

♋ Cancer
June 22 - July 23
You can't be expected to make an unbiased decision about something where your own interests are at stake. Either do what is best for yourself or ask a neutral third party for advice.

♌ Leo
July 24 - Aug. 23
It may be true that you have gone over the top and offended someone important but so what? If you go through life watching your every word you won't get much said.

♍ Virgo
Aug. 24 - Sept. 23
You seem to believe that everyone is as honest as you. What happens today will open your eyes, in a big way, to the fact that that isn't the case.

♎ Libra
Sept. 24 - Oct. 23
You are on the verge of giving up on something that you can't seem to crack. What you don't realize is that you are closer to a breakthrough than you have ever been before. Hold on.

♏ Scorpio
Oct. 24 - Nov. 22
It may annoy you that some people are so slow on the uptake but not everyone can be a big-brained Scorpio like you. Make allowances today.

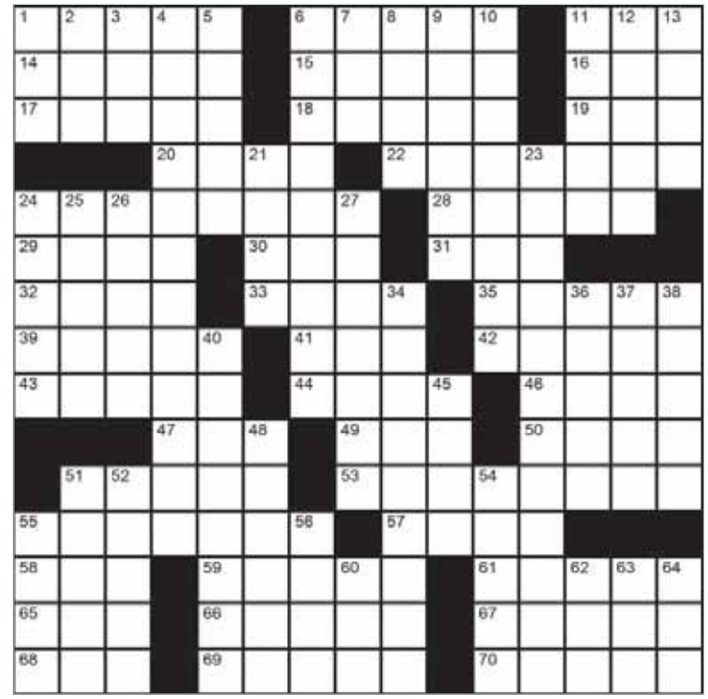
♐ Sagittarius
Nov. 23 - Dec. 21
If someone says you need to be cautious, act on their advice. It may not be your natural way but a few days from now you can make up for it by going to the other extreme.

♑ Capricorn
Dec. 22 - Jan. 20
Someone will make you a tempting offer today but if you are smart you'll demand more. According to the planets they want you on board so much they can probably be persuaded to up their offer substantially.

♒ Aquarius
Jan. 21 - Feb. 19
The danger today is that you could say something on the spur of the moment and get yourself in a whole load of trouble with authority figures.

♓ Pisces
Feb. 20 - March 20
You owe someone a favour and you'll be expected to repay it in the next 24 hours. They went out of their way. Do the same.

Crossword: Canada Across and Down by Kelly Ann Buchanan



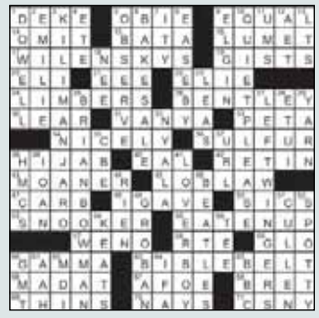
Across

1. Score-makers in hockey
6. The Divine __ _ (Bette Midler)
11. Appropriate
14. Rankin __, Nunavut
15. Prefix with 'arthritis'
16. Sonny & Cher
17. Everglades eeker!
18. On-the-road reversal
19. "All We __" by Kim Mitchell
20. Chess piece
22. Marked 'Received'
24. Architectural barriers
28. Having wings
29. __-friendly
30. Kind of power
31. Knight's title
32. Vesper __, "Casino Royale" (2006) character
33. Unfreeze
35. Move along rapidly
39. Slang-style friends
41. Religious song: "Lead __, _ King Eternal"
42. Mystery writer Dame Christie, informally
43. Boat's back
44. Donnybrook
46. Particles
47. '_' __ for Inuvik
49. "Cold Mountain" (2003) role
50. Roughly: 2 wds.
51. "Buffalo Stance" singer Ms. Cherry
53. Actress Amanda
55. 1988 Tracy Chapman hit: 2 wds.
57. Want
58. Fleur-de-__
59. Maynard G. __ (Beatnik on "The Many Loves of Dobie Gillis")
61. Ambiguous
65. Ms. Longoria
66. Arctic boat
67. Matrikin
68. Actress Susan
69. "Grease" (1978) role
70. 'Mr.' or 'Mrs.' on "Three's Company"

Down

1. Showbiz job
2. 1996 Barenaked Ladies album: 'Born __ _ Pirate Ship'
3. __-Rock (Music genre)
4. Edith Prickley's signature outfit, __ __ jacket and hat
5. Guitar attachment
6. Peak in Auyuittuq National Park in Nunavut that's named after a Norse god: 2 wds.
7. 'Special' suffix
8. Mr. Townsend, et al.
9. Some mattresses
10. World's most famous painting: 2 wds.
11. Modify
12. Mush, recipes-style
13. Steel-__ boots
21. Left
23. Calgary Flames captain: 2 wds.
24. Parts of fruits
25. Heretofore: 2 wds.
26. 1960s song: "Walk Away __"
27. Ms. Twain's
34. 'Let's Be Ready' is a current album by what Toronto band, with The?: 2 wds.
36. Q. "What's composer Mr. Stravinsky's first name?" A. "__, _ believe."
37. Temporary hair colouring product
38. Do over the lawn
40. CBC's "Mr. D" actress Naomi
45. Mr. Diggs
48. Suraj __, "Life of Pi" (2012) star
51. Easily duped
52. Journalism piece
54. Flu symptom
55. Escaped
56. Rider's 'rope'
60. "Not __!" (Pretty good!)
62. Opening
63. Vehicle variety, Sport-__
64. Poet's 'always

Yesterday's Crossword

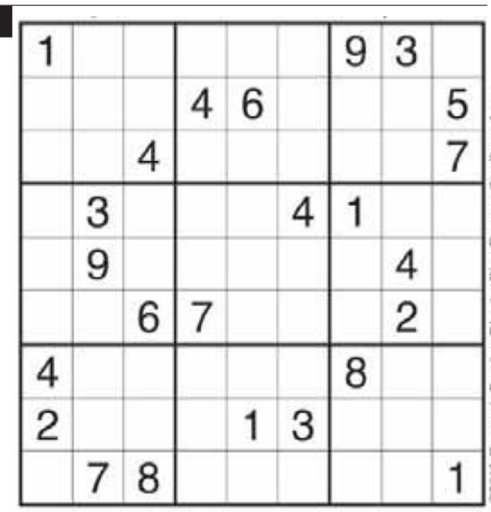


Online

See today's answers at metronews.ca/answers

Conceptis Sudoku by Dave Green

How to play
Fill in the grid, so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1-9. There is no math involved.



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Yesterday's Sudoku

7	3	6	5	8	2	9	1	4
5	9	8	1	3	4	6	2	7
4	2	1	7	9	6	8	3	5
6	7	2	3	5	8	4	9	1
9	1	5	4	2	7	3	6	8
8	4	3	6	1	9	7	5	2
1	6	7	9	4	5	2	8	3
3	8	9	2	7	1	5	4	6
2	5	4	8	6	3	1	7	9

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